EL NUEVO MUNDO: A POEM

By Louis James Block

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EL NUEVO MUNDO: A POEM BY LOUIS JAMES BLOCK: AUTHOR OF DRAMATIC SKÉTCHES AND POEMS.

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

TENNYSON.

CHICAGO:
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY,
1893.

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Steure, muthiger Segler! Es mag der Witz Dich verhöhnen,
Und der Schiffer am Steuer senken die lässige Hand.
Immer, immer nach West! Dort muß die Küste sich zeigen,
Liegt sie doch deutlich, und liegt schlummernd vor Deinem Verstand.
Traue dem leitenden Gott und folge dem schweigenden Weltmeer!
Wär sie doch nicht, sie stieg jetzt aus den Fluthen empor.
Mit dem Genius steht die Natur in ewigem Bunde;
Was die eine verspricht, leistet die andre gewiß. Schiller.

TO THE WOMEN OF AMERICA.

DEDICATION.

I.

The century's unrelenting strength of quest
Has followed Thought through blossoms and through weeds,
And found (men say) that every pathway leads
Into a cloudland where the footing prest
Is the insubsistence of a sea's unrest;
An island in an ocean of mere dream,
The life which hoped a truest and a best,
Learns that the best and truest only seem;
A bitter, helpless creed!
No wonder-working deed
Can thence draw vigor which should surely stream
Through all its pulses, and its fire must deem
Itself a strange subversion of the law
Holding vague insecurity in awe;
A luminous truth that truth is built on ignorance,
And Time's endeavor vast the dazzling gift of chance!

II.

Nay, we are not deceived; no lampless night
Glooms round the world and hope with its despair;
Thought wingèd rises into regions fair
Where is the dominant, all-transfiguring light;
Faith has revealed the heart of Love aright

That beats through history's tempest and its roar,
The felt decadence of the selfless might
Sweeps from the skies the cloud-heaps more and more;
Who now shall further doubt
That a most dismal rout
Waits the dull fears, whose threatenings loud and sore,
With bannered hosts, against our temples bore?
Unshattered on the Heavenward-looking hill
The marble splendor fronts the sunrise still;
The blue-eyed Goddess smiles and turns her unveiled shield
Upon the invading bands, who strew the smoking field.

III.

Yet progress has been devious and slow:
The Spirit sometimes has been out of breath
And pale unto the very verge of death;
Fierce as the mountain torrent's sudden flow,
Erratic as the wildest winds that blow,
The movement oft has seemed to rush and fall
Down steeps and crags where safety might not go;
Then the swift stream has made a sharp recall
Into its truer bed,
And by some influence led
That keeps its foam-flecked waves in juster thrall,
Has bounded forward to the longed-for hall,
Windy and large, with changing sky, and free,
The waters' end and aim, the brilliant sea;
So hope, the sea-gull, lifts his more adventurous wings,
Lured by the flaming sun wherewith the wide world sings.

IV.

Some clear-eyed angel must have watched and tended
The growths of love and patience in the heart,
Some wisdom guarded with divinest art
Gentleness, faith, and sweet assurance, blended
Into a dream which saw the storm transcended;
Chief wonder that such fragile blooms survived
Amid the conflict seemingly never ended,
Chief miracle that they none the less contrived
To taste the finer air
Which is their daily fare;
Securely in the rudest bosom hived,
And from the sternest gloom and rage revived,
Their very slightness gave them strength to gain
Gradual possession of the changed domain;
For they are of the tribe which toil and strive the best
When they are needed most and days are dismalest.

V.

Love felt the bitterness in those ancient days,
Being forced to mask as passion base and rude,
And mother of a fierce and brawling brood,
Hatreds that used the noonday's sovereign blaze
To lamp man further on destruction's ways;
Yet even then Love knew to claim and charm,
And hold the impregnable and awless gaze;
Amid the wanton revelry of harm
Arose the prophetess
Touched by God's own caress,
And led the clan in hours of dire alarm;

So woman's weak and terrorless right arm
Pointed the pathway men were glad to take,
And then as now her words were strong to wake
The trembling higher moods, that slowly came to win
The place of gradual rule and power the soul within.

VI.

But Love was lured by glamour of delight
Into forgetfulness of loftier aims,
And sank to depths that were not unlike shame's;
Set in a paradise of softest might,
And lulled in dreams that made the heavens a slight
And empty thing to lose, weighed in the scale
With sense imperial, and suffused aright
With the refined and subtly sweet avail,
The hours wore on apace,
Touching with hands that lace
And part in a strange dance's measured pale,
And pleasure said at heart its faint *All hail!*
Lest too loud speaking should evoke the death
Which must wait on such perilous charmèd breath;
Shut in these mist-built walls the world's strength feminine
Slumbered, but knew in visions that its sleep was sin.

VII.

Could the imprisonment last? Nay, warrior queens
Threw the frail chains from off them like clear dew
Shed from the flank of lioness when new
The sanguine sunrise bursts the leafy screens;

Or radiant motherhood pre-eminent leans
From its enforced seclusion and requires
Room for the growth whose dear supremacy weans
From base subjection to unleashed desires;
Or the lithe sorceress
With eyes of wild excess
Warmed her ambitions at great empire's fires;
Or the loud triumphs of impassioned lyres,
Mixed with low wailings of a life suppressed,
Floated across the time like foam on crest
Of fluctuant waters or a meteor's lingering track,
Paling the stars themselves, over night's depth of black.

VIII.

The masculine might of will arose supreme
In the white mid of heaven; now womanhood,
Co-equal, potent, fair, beside him stood,
No mistress and no daughter, some bright dream
Of golden wisdom, or a vague foregleam
Of love's own pureness, but that love's great whole
That wisdom's rich and self-concentred stream,
Having known grief and ruler of the soul;
A new life was begun,
Lit by that female sun,
Wherewith earth thrilled from its stern pole to pole,
As hope sweeps through the reaches of the soul;
The future spoke unto the present pale,
The new light overflowed the horizon's veil,
The dominations barbarous of the twilight heard
Above them sound the rumor of their dooming word.

IX.

Two equal powers in all life's separate spheres,
Two streams of influence working out the good,
Two infinite forms of potent servanthood,
Two strengths arrayed against dark doubts and fears,
The feeling whose fine clearness knows and hears,
The intelligence that is sweet warmth and glow,
The instinct whose forthrightness never veers,
The thought which pierces thorough sense and show,
With freedom everywhere
To build the high and fair,
Each being rich soil for other's hand to sow,
And inner space where nobler harvests grow,
Life's centre found in each and outer rim
Reaching beyond the stars most distant-dim,
Until the end is gained where temporal difference
Fades in the light of heaven, supreme, unstained, intense.

X.

O Western World! what the long strain and toil
Of the great periods have wrought and won
Leaves unto you a labor but begun;
Here is the land of promised wine and oil,
Here is the State which many failures soil
Incarnated anew and strong once more,
Alert, high-hearted, and equipped to foil
The dangers that confront us with their roar;
Here is the land of gold
Which wise men seek to hold,

Not gold whose heapings mock with longing sore,
But purer metal which for helmet wore
And shield the brave who saw and loved the right,
And were suffused with eager conquest's might;
O golden land of ours! Arise and strive to be.
Time's purposes attained, Freedom and Victory!

I.

THE OLD WORLD.

In the great morning of the world,
The Spirit of God with might unfurled
The flag of Freedom over Chaos,
  And all its banded anarchs fled,
Like vultures frighted from Imaus
  Before an earthquake's tread.

SHELLEY

THE OLD WORLD

I.

God's Thought rose clear before him and he said:
"Lo! I will fashion for mine eyes to see
The mighty miracle of Liberty;
Unto my will shall many wills be wed,
With mine own life shall lesser lives be fed,
With mine own being filled and wondrous fire,
The increasing light by which all hearts are led
Unto the summit of supreme desire;
From glowering suns and stars,
From elemental wars,
From interflux of powers and savage ire
That bid the eugirding night pause and admire,
From anguish and despair, the wordless brood
That haunt the expanse of forests primal-rude,
I will bring forth that mine unenvying soul may know
The lofty love wherewith but Freedom's self can glow."

II.

Then forth into the night a tumult spread,
The fierce contentions of contrarious powers,
And loud the noise was of the risen hours,
And each one on the lust of battle fed,

And life seemed with the horror stricken dead;
Then crescent, pale, mysteriously born,
Like a low word divinely breathed and said,
Light rose on the abyss whose ravenous scorn
Lay soothed into a smile,
And slowly perished while
The blue skies rose above, and overworn
The void gave way where earths with many a horn
And curving gulf held back the seething waves,
And mastered them and ruled them as the slaves
Of large intents to come, and grasses clothed the rocks
And blossoms burned amid in softly colored flocks.

III.

So shone the glory of the sun and night
Became resplendent with her stars and moon,
And life began to tremble where its boon
Had fallen on silence, and the morn's firm light
Broke its strange trance, and into joy and sight
Burst the quick dance of wondrous sensitive things,
And seas were peopled with vast forms of might,
And in the trees a myriad music rings,
And the untimorous sod
By manifold shapes was trod,
And lo! in forest deep, beside clear springs,
And on the mountains sides where each wind sings,
Beneath the skies where gold clouds rose and fled,
Like breaths of bliss when hope and aim are wed,
While expectation knew how far the miracle ran
Beyond its farthest, came the consummation, Man.

IV.

In the cold dusk of caverns and by waves
Of inland waters or on island shores
Roared and tumulted the first reinless wars
Of nameless und unnumbered tribes; fierce slaves
Of bitter passion and the fear which graves
Its horror deep upon the heart, and makes
The world a vast impendence whose gloom laves
Half lamplessly; for no sharp lightning breaks
It save ghost newly fled
Into lands of the dead,
Capricious answer giving for their wild sakes
Who raise loud-ringing prayers like sea that breaks
Upon a rock-bound shore with noisy foam;
Pain drives them forth from wasted home to home,
And fashions serpents, rocks, or trees into a god
Of potenced nothingness. a mind-created rod.

V.

But the brave sun arose in kinglihead
From darkness of the night and men looked forth
And saw his hand in blessing laid from north
To kindlier south, and their swift longing sped
About his footsteps; so their watchings bred
Hopes of emerging from their deeps of pain,
Unto a lustrous height of being led,
And noble zenith of unshattered gain;
They gladly saw the sway
Of heroes, and the day
Of gradual peace began to shine and reign,

And faith to purge itself of earth-born stain;
Then through the vales the herds began to pass
Where the sweet waters wet the thickening grass,
And round the loftier dwelling of the chief and king
Rose hum of toilers and the voice of maids who sing.

VI.

The restless thought with inner fire aflame,
Like lamp soft glowing through its rosy screen,
Illumed again what eager eyes had seen,
And deeper toil of spirit strove to frame
Anew its large possessions and lay claim
Upon a broad demesne that bloomed and shone
Before it, a miraculous realm to tame,
Above the outer one of grief and moan;
The silver dreams that throng
Give birth to wondrous song,
To myth and story winged with rhythmic tone,
And hopes that are the very spirit's own;
Whence flow a greater mastery and skill
Which hold the tribes in friendlier chain and will,
And bind in golden sheaves what has been sought and done
And are the presage of the height already won.

VII.

Then order rose beside the calm-waved sea,
First subsidence of the submerging fate,
A mighty people and a kingdom great,
Homaging strength of glorious ancestry.
Their king was father; his wise empery

Ensouled his subjects and confirmed their deed,
So that they grew and wove for men to be
A fabric of observance where the need
Of worship of the law
Stood forth in perfect awe;
A noble issue with the power to breed
The thoughts that who would live must know and read;
Their seer, Confucius, spoke such words to men
As have not ceased their sounding, denizen
Of the high heaven of meek obedience, leader sure
Into the land of peace which shall at last endure.

VIII.

Under the fervid skies, and mid the growth
Of tangled forests where the mountains vast
Circle the shaded glens, a gloomy past
Enwraps a nobler people; ever loth
To grasp the present firmly, seeing both
The worlds of earth and heaven in mist of dreams
Enrobed and mingled, they seemed bound by oath
Of high allegiance to the One who gleams
Recedingly on the gaze
Turned Him wards; by what ways
Of severence from the body, down what streams
Of anguish did they seek Him; the land teems
With monstrous shapes and visions that enthrall;
And chiefly thee, O Buddh, the foiled ones call
Savior and friend, thee clothed in contemplation's rest,
And finding loss of all and nothingness the best.

IX.

Forth came the sun of Persia, worshippers
Of golden fires warring upon the dark,
And dimly conscious of the answering spark
That lights each heart with dream of truth, and errs
Not in such dreaming; lofty characters
Of fixèd purpose to bear unto men,
Despite the frowning hindrance which deters,
The glow of spirit trembling back again
Unto the sovereign splendor,
As star is star's attender;
The soldier people rose from rocky glen
And rivered plain, and earth was gladdened when
Their victories brought the myriad tribes to be
The children of the flame whose leaping free
And wind-souled bounding skywards it was joy to make
A symbol of the hope that burns for all men's sake.

X.

Beside the inland deep whose blue-waved flow
Makes path dividuous unto luring realms,
That visioned speed the flight of fearless helms
Breaking through veils of distance, whither go
The race's hopes, which dimly seem to know
The fate of freedom showing like a sun
On the sky's verge, where luminous mists rise slow,
Dispersing from before the blaze begun,
The heroic sailor land
Uplifts her puissant hand;
Lo! white-sailed commerce bids her mariners shun

No vague far water-ways, nor leave undone
A toil that wrests lands from the weltering seas;
Brave like her god, much toiling Hercules,
And finding even pain a mystery of the heart
Disclosing devious paths of conquest's peerleess art.

XI.

O wondrous people of the tortured fate,
People grown strong with very sight of God,
Strong to make live your stormy period
In the wide soul of earth forever, hate
And dark despair upon your footsteps wait
For weary centuries; giving God to man,
Revealing the sure mean to dissipate
The bitterness of woes that rose and span
A mist of fear around him
Age-long that held and bound him,
Ye failed in your own destiny and wan
A gloomy severance from the hope that ran
Like a swift bearer of the brilliant torch
Before you; now within the throngèd porch
Of the white temple of the future ye too stand
And your own God will ope and answer your demand.

XII.

What looms against the purple air, white flame
Of stone that seems to climb and to aspire,
The wingèd thing of manifold desire
Before it, brooding and depressed with shame,
The dumb eyes sad with question and the blame

Of sore defeat? has Heaven no answer fit?
Lo! the soul waits, judged and set free to claim
Its guerdon, in the citadel, unlit
By lamp of any hope,
And lingering out the scope
Of its great longing; near the temple sit
Memnonian figures and the walls are writ
With scrolls of ancient days, but through the aisles
Oppression hovers and the voiceless piles
Answer not anything and toward the silver sea
The dreaming land looks whence the wished response must be.

XIII.

In after days, O dim-eyed Orient,
Your countless armies crossed the wind-swept straits
And shook the soil where fearless Freedom waits
Your foiled attack, backwards you fled forespent
And baffled in your mighty world-intent;
Your eyes were wan with pallid dreams and dreads,
Your footsteps faltered on the ways besprent
With battle's wreck, and the imperial heads
Of Europe's leaders young
Upon your dazed sight sprung,
And your vast half-thoughts sunk into the beds
Of world-remembrances, the potent dead's
Last influx into life's new golden bloom;
You could not rend the heavy primitive doom
That swathed you and the fire of soul and joinèd God
Burst on the plains which beaten hordes of yours had trod.

XIV.

O land most radiant of the ancient world,
Which burst the troubled dream wherein time lay,
And shone the crimson dawn of very day
And life arisen in fields with dew impearled,
And over which the vanishing vapors curled,
Uncovering the sky and mounting sun,
Before you fear and wrath swept downward whirled
To deeps of the abysses unbegun;
Freedom awoke with Greece,
And violet-crownèd peace;
The soul was born and thought's first victory won,
God stood in manhood's guise, and the foredone
Base monsters of the ancient dread and terror
Sank backwards from their pride of height and error,
Being made subservient to the splendid dance of Love
And Beauty, come to earth from realms of Powers above.

XV.

Unto world-conquest you marched forth, O Rome,
Grandest of powers in the long roll of time,
And shaper of the commonweal sublime
In which all peoples found a place and home;
You knew with your firm legions on to roam
And bind more wonderful than theirs a law
Upon the toiling kingdoms; in the tome
Of God's own strength your searching insight saw
A form of dominance
That held your charmèd glance;

And long as sovereignty kept close your awe
Set on man's right to build, bereft of flaw,
His inner life of choice into brave sight
Of majesty and rule and visible might,
The world was all your own; deepener of thought to will,
Although your own hand slew you, yet you rule earth still.

XVI.

Next rose the star of wonder in the east,
And wise and lowly came to worship where
The babe lay in the manger; light more fair
And from diviner realms led to the feast
Which welcomed chief the one who came as least;
Earth's monarchies and national gods
Trembled upon their thrones, and day increased
With passing of the worn-out periods;
The realm of the within
Was opened, and the din
Of outer pomp fell with the lictor's rods;
From the great forest's moist and sun-flecked sods
Swept the blue-eyed renewer and for him
God rose in spirit and truth; the Orient dim
Clasped hands with sun-souled Greece, and knowledge of the soul
Glowed on the peoples as their life's supremest goal,

XVII.

The time lay weltering in mere shame and fear,
Monstrous with hopelessness and strange self-scorn
Whence every form of wild desire was born,

And passions that fulfillment made more drear.
There was but one huge empire, and the near
Self-slaughter in its dead forgetfulness
Of elder purposes made it appear
Mere evanescence into space; to bless
The uncharactered vastitude
And pour life fierce-renewed
Into that chaos of world-wide distress,
And cleanse with storm for touch of God's caress
Upon his children's forehead, burst and ran
The foaming hordes of the barbarian,
And power again ensouled with what must surely be
Saw freedom's sun cloud-burdened risen above the sea.

XVIII.

Sure inwardness and self-unfolding thought,
Spirit's fine motions in each struggling heart,
The whole of life resurgent in the part,
Were new achievements; truth within was brought
Unto a growing vivid radiance wrought
By troubled flight from the mere tangible;
Pulsings of soul the old world never sought,
And nobler governance of holier will,
The blonde-haired Northener
Felt in him start and stir,
Whence bloom transformed the meadow and the hill,
Which deeper carols of the poets thrill;
The lands which had been savagely estranged
Once more in brief bright unity were ranged;
They had gone through sad years, yet into every man
Entered a love wherewith his blood more freely ran.

XIX.

Mistress of realms celestial, and the spouse
Of God himself, bride of the heavenly King,
Whose solacing song your magic lips made ring
Above the weary peoples, to your house
Of comfort which the time half disallows,
And your hand's patient touch and dominance,
Fled the world-hunted and sin-branded brows
And gathered light from your uplifting glance.
O founded on God's rock,
And shepherdess of the flock,
Who looked for calm amid the whirl and chance
Of evil days. O Church, who saw advance
The slow sun up the higher-stretching skies,
Until power wooed you with his glozing lies,
You held the sacred keys, and your conviction turned
The wheel of progress and with truth your deep eyes burned.

XX.

A sovereign rose, whose wise unfaltering hand
Laid hold upon the tempest and the urge
Of unbound passions, and within the verge
Of careful potence bade them furl, expand,
As listed him; not long the roar unmanned
Waited when death gave him a grave too deep
For hopes that Charlemagne with brief breath fanned
Into a sudden flame; on toward the steep
Sea of mad conflict bore
The undiscernings sore;

Sheeer lawlessness erected tower and keep
Above the fields where blinded slaveries weep,
And puny trembling monarchs drank the breath
Of rule empoisoned with the smell of death;
Pale peace fled from the earth save where her lovers shun
The storm within the church's anthemed orison.

XXI.

But heaven is never starless, and the moon
Lifts up her silver face from boding cloud
That hides but ill her splendor with the shroud
Of storm and battle; surer comes the boon
Of high self-conquest, and the mystic rune
Of freedom won from mid of fear and hate
Shines clearer on men's brows; forth late or soon,
And rising far above the bitter fate
That dominates the age
Glooming its every page,
The errant knights fare forth and lie in wait
To force vile tyrannies from heights elate;
They see pure Love within the heaven of thought,
Fashioned of gentle hopes, with dreamings wrought:
Queen of the life and hearts that worship at her shrine,
She lifts her eyes and guides them unto deeds divine.

XXII.

Again the awakened East had risen as erst
In hours forgotten, and the conquering march
Of arms Arabian underneath the arch
Of many a sky had passed; their fervor burst

Their native deserts, and their worship nurst
The hope of bringing back unto the One,
Whom they named God, the peoples now immerst
In giant tasks; but vain the victory won,
And vain their prophet's call;
Against their kingdoms fall
The Westerners who scorn their toils foredone,
And beauty risen beneath their regnant sun;
As in the days of the far older time
The Orient reels back shattered, and the clime
Of Europe knows them but as sombre scudding rack
That winds drive from before the light's sky-cleaving track.

XXIII.

So was the West triumphant, and the gold
Of growing light was conqueror of the storm
Which had beset its dawn with gloom enorme;
The heaving billows of the conflict rolled
Soothed by the splendor, and the hunted fold
Of night unseasonable fled on before;
The heart's deep visionings became more bold
And turned unto the sacred land which bore
Love basely filleted
And even mocked when dead;
Should they not gain the tomb? thus more and more
The life of man as one began to soar
Before their gazings, and the memoried East
Awoke new purpose, which grew and increased
So that the bitter march was full of rich avail
And truth again came sweeping down the orient gale.

XXIV.

Nor does high wisdom linger; knowledge grows
To more imperial potence and the soul
Sees heaven's great realms before it float and roll,
Centering in the pure passion-glowing rose
Before God's throne; whiter than sifted snows
Love rules one heart with purpose clearer far
Than old Greece thrilled with, and his rapt song flows
From the time's depths, more silvern than the star
That lights the violet sky
Before the dayspring's eye
Takes to itself its lucence and the war
With night hath one more victory, scimetar
Made for the ages' hand, and fashioned well
Of prayer and anguish and divinest spell,
Slaying the beast within the man and hewing way
To where Beatrice's eyes are pursuivants of day.

XXV.

As from the flawless stone the mighty limbs
And sun-turned face disclose from day to day
Their loosening glory, and the shadows play
Beneath wide eyes wherein the joyous hymns
Of wakening life lie silent, interims
Of loveliness and strength to hold subdued
Worship forever, being imaged thought which swims
Upon the sense with rapture still renewed,
So from the whelm and toss
Of aims that strive and cross

The Nation rears its forehead, and imbued
With heart to vanquish difference and feud
Reveals a power superb, that is to set
On the expectant world a coronet
And sign of coming peace, and Freedom is the name
The great birth bears, though vaguely known and sad with blame.

XXVI.

Earth grew more beautiful and human life
Swept on more nobly; dreams of seer and saint
Gave way to joys that held without complaint
Their revelries within the present; strife
Yet roars in madness where the hordes are rife
Who pour from mythic Asia's soundless deeps,
And thrust anew the rude barbaric knife
At city's throat where ancient learning weeps
Because of evil days;
So toward the western ways
Greece once more bears her quenchless torch, and steeps
In goldener light, and re-enthronèd keeps
Her inexhausted regnance, that is sure
As the great stars above and must endure,
Being part of truth eternal and the pauseless strength
Which shall bring all mankind into its calm at length.

XXVII.

The golden belted bees that hum within
The honey-hearted flowers of pleasure fed
The soul with strange delights, and sorcerous led

Her feet on poisonous paths of passion; yet to win
The beauty, which, born of the sun, had been
The young world's longing, and to see anew
The whole of life, its triumph, love and sin,
Statued or risen in towers or morned to view
In unsurpassable splendor
Of colors fierce or tender,
Became the time's desire; then soft winds blew
Fraught with a lighter perfume, clearer dew,
From long unvisited realms of Poesy;
Birds of fresh joys sang in the new-leaved tree
Of living disenthralled from gloom of prisoning dreams,
And man walked forth beside the sky-reflecting streams.

XXVIII.

Heart of the world and mystery of time,
Eyesight and life for which the pageant moves,
Freedom, for whose fair sake adown the grooves
Of ringing change from heavy slumberous prime
Unto thought's latter all-transpicuous clime,
The toil and struggle of mankind have gone!
Your steps have been amid the heat and rime
Of nature's tumult, and the haggard wan
Despair of history,
Lessening in slow degree
As you emerged in your own light and on
The hills of conquest glittered paragon!
O mirror sending back to heavenly powers
Their imaged loveliness and crowned with flowers!
O unity of lands, the morning of your day
Flashes across the verge, and holds the night at bay!

XXIX.

The mountains rose benignant and the sea
Clung to its shores with lingering lover's lips;
The world of trees and blooms sprang from eclipse
And smiled as never in the past; to be
Thought's painted veil and wizardry
Of outer where all dreams are shown and glassed
Was felt as nature's part of life; and free,
His splendors equally around him cast,
The sun uprist on high,
Center of worlds that vie
In happy worship; men knew clear at last
The need of firm obedience and their vast
Divisions sought to close and fall in tune;
The night with blossom-stars or plenilune,
The day with sun amidmost of the curving skies,
Held the fair earth as love in arms of lover lies.

XXX.

The torch of thought gleamed on the caverned rocks,
And earth made bare her heart; no smallest thing
But held the secret wherewith planets ring
And make the music that enfolds and locks
The universe in its embrace; the mocks
Of elders, eye-bound with dead loves and hopes,
Fled in the winds of search like colored flocks
Of leaves at autumn-tide; time's horoscopes
Were prescient of resolve
And effort that revolve
The reborn planet; fetters and old ropes
Of dim opinion fell, weak as mere tropes

Of sounding sophistries, when urgent hours
Arouse the soul of man with all its powers,
When voice of prophet calls the wandering feet and brains
Back to the needed toil on ever-harvested plans.

XXXI.

One deep intention held the restless soul
Of all the period, shook it with vague thrill
Of grand success, nerved its converging will
Unto sheer fearlessness, and held the whole
White-heated fervor bound unto the pole
Of a great action; star that rose to guide
The impetuous endeavor to the goal
For which the unwearied centuries fleet and ride
The tempest-peopled sea
Was search for land where tree
Of Freedom might grow surely and abide
The hour whose striking had been long denied.
Firm in the heart of men and impulse strong
Was need to grasp the earth and to prolong
Their nobler life about its curving sides, absorb
Its spherèd secret, and command the obedient orb.

XXXII.

Then Freedom might forever build its home
Upon that conquest, and the very stars
Rising from out the infinite dark thrust bars
Away from their best knowing, and the dome
Of heaven hold no more mystery, and to roam
From light to light of gradual truth become

The joy of search, feeling on brow the foam
And wind of thought's great ocean where the dumb
Forth-reachings of the past
Fruition find at last;
One orb being solved, the distant maze and hum
Of worlds whose multitude had dared to numb
The earlier gropings rise in ordered song,
Repeating the one story; from the strong
Desire of the great ages leaps divine and mild
The longed-for, mild-eyed goddess, Fate's Fate-slaying child!

XXXIII.

Also the truth that filled the restless mind
Of the rapt seeker found a dwelling place
Which should repel time's malice, face to face
With old discoveries bring all human kind,
Hold wisest memories safe and unresigned
From regent purpose, cast the miracle far
Of budding knowledges like seed confined
In fruitful soil breaking in bloom as star
Is clad with silver light
To wage war on the night
And conquer, burst the imprisoning bond and bar
Of glooms that sought to hold the soul and mar,
And build a realm where men's just dreams might tread
And know their strength and bliss of kinglihead;
This too was granted them; behold in hall and nook
Of simpler life, yea everywhere, the charmèd book!

XXXIV.

Voyagings forth to the east and wonder-tales
Of golden monarchs in clime-favored lands!
The western ocean licks its sparkling sands
With tongues of promise; round the globed earth sails
Wide forethought fearless; all the eastern gales
Fraught with the glow of story waft the oars
On westward paths unto the rose-brimmed vales
Whither quick fancy lifts its wings and soars;
Upon one soul more high
Than the ensphering sky,
One heart great to include hope's boundless shores,
And prophecy's divinely fashioned lores,
Rose the entrancing vision; presage he
Of wonders and achievements yet to be;
Into the vasty dark his ship pursued its way,
Secure that westward was the spring of man's bright day!

II.

THE MAN.

The sun set, but set not his hope;
Stars rose; his faith was earlier up;
Fixed on the enormous galaxy,
Deeper and older seemed his eye;
And matched his sufferance sublime
The taciturnity of time.

EMERSON.

THE MAN.

I.

Who knows the secret of the sunrise? who
  Shall say what splendor of the exhaustless sun
  Across the sombre waiting skies shall run?
Who knows the point from which the first wind blew
That brought the hidden sky again to view?
  On what far tip of Ocean's many waves
Fell the first moonbeam? or what drop of dew
  Hid first amid the rose's petals, slaves
    To the sweet dream of love
    Her coming forth hath wove?
  What edge of storm struck first the trembling knaves
  Who king earth's follies, and what yawn of graves
Oped first to enclose them from the lightning stroke
  Fallen and quivering? or what first ray broke
From what far heavens to shine within the hearts of men
And bring them back to life and truth and joy again?

II.

Surely the ages climb unto the Deed!
  Beneath the sod the slow seed bursts and toils,
  The laboring spirit laughs at vain recoils

On its intention; still the patient need
Moulds the great world and bids arise, exceed,
The light that darkling lay amid dense scorn;
Denials perish of its right to lead
To spaces where its glow increased to morn
Is promise of the day
Having the word to say
Which leaves old crimes disseated and forlorn,
While faith resurgent in the just is born;
As the earth's rivers flow unto the sea,
Time's unseen tides unto the yet to be,
So might and things and life speed to the centre where
The new achievement leaps forth to the sun and air.

III.

Deep in one heart the fateful future bides,
A point of expectation and of thought,
Which have this frail and slender vessel wrought
For their enswathement; his the dream that rides
Into the haven where its storm-swept sides
May wreathe themselves in flowers of triumph won;
Deep in his soul the new evangel hides
Toward which the confluent streams of hope have run
Since light was on the sea
Where his great task should be;
Upon that suffering head the winds may beat
Whitening his locks, and the unwearying feet
May tread the ways of failure, and his eyes
May see through tears morn after morn arise,
But all the stars of heaven and the sun's swiftest fires
Bring on the hour which shall respond to his desires.

IV.

Italia! with full hands you have ever come
Unto the feast of nations, rise once more,
Be your grand self that all men may adore;
Your cry of war in olden days struck dumb
The dwellers of the farthest earth; your sum
Of glories made a crown for your fair brow
Which was the light of law and masterdom
Burning within our house of rule even now;
Your Church's holy flame
Made clear the sacred name
When darkness held the lands; later your vow
Unto high beauty led you to endow
The joy of men with its best heritage
Of picture and of marble; and your rage
Of large beneficence had not completely won
Its height of giving had you urged not forth your son

V.

To find the newer world far in the west
Toward which some instinct in the heart of man
Had pointed since the flow of time began;
The brooding boy beside your waves sat blest
In a large dream of earth's alluring best,
A forefeel of the way his ships must go,
Borne on the treacherous subsidence and crest
Into the light that later eyes should know;
Within him burned and thrilled
The purposes world-willed

For which all skies are globed and all winds blow;
Son of a sailor-city and the foe
Of whatso night hung over distant seas
And hid from sight uncaptived lands and leas,
His thought surged far and high and gazed upon of stars
Virginal, which beaconed him from forth their speeding cars.

VI.

What the great halls of learning told his soul
Of mystic project and alert command,
The golden memories of sighted land
By ancient wanderers on the toss and roll
Of half forgotten waves, what murmuring stole
Upon him of the vaguely-looming fate
That was to be his anguish and his goal,
Found in him the resolve whose form and date
Are not the fruit of time
And grow within a clime
Which has heaven's smile for sky; calmly he sate
And what was kin unto that mood and mate
Came to his hand and gave its message up,
As one drinks wine from out a jeweled cup,
And he went forth strong in the truth and firmly bent
To search for lore of the far realm where'er he went.

VII.

The sea knew well her master; from her came
A voice of urgence and a cry that stung
His heart to answer and about him clung
A host of visionings that roused to flame

His sense of kingship; his the hand to tame
Her wild upleapings, make her bear the yoke,
And fawn about the keels in happy shame
That into her close western secrets broke;
He knew her scorn and smile
And fathomed every wile,
Treading in joy the hollowed pine or oak;
The astonished sailors felt the peerless stroke
Of still assurance when the headland rose
Before them and the morning brought swift close
To mutinous fury facing the near Afric sand
And impotent to make him seek the wished-for strand.

VIII.

He held the wonder in his heart and soon
From all the winds came confirmation strong
To bear his swift previsionings along;
He followed every track beneath the moon
And sought from south to north whatever rune
Deciphered showed the path he was to tread;
Nor any region might refuse the boon
Unto his asking; forth his steps were led
Unto the extreme shore
That then the honor wore
Of searchings far and wide into the dread
And awful marvels that the ocean bred;
And knowledge came to aid him and her speech
Pointed unto the fruitage in his reach;
The noble Florentine, the traveler of the skies,
Like a new planet saw the new West glow and rise.

IX.

The very light was filled with fair sea tales
As if the sun were leagued with his chief hope;
A luminous mist of story and of trope
Swept through the lands and girt his visioned sails
With the exalting bliss that never fails.
What if he knew not half the magic lore
Which came down wafted on the freighted gales
From the dim past, yet Plato's vanished shore
And the stern Roman's dream
Seen in the stormless stream
Of light prophetic, and what picture more
Shone to complete the world, rejoiced to soar
Into the heaven of his musings, cling
To his enlinking thought, and there to sing
A music that by many had been softly heard
And iterant in refrain the East had West averred.

X.

Mornwards were realms of fairy; far Cathay
Drew with its towers and singular roofs of gold,
And farther towards the springs of light the bold
Discoverer saw the foam that starred the way
To great Zipangu; who should say him nay?
In Asia's dimness potent Prester John
Ruled still (so spoke their dreamings) and the day
Of rosy lustre had not fled and gone
From glorious Kublai Khan
Whose width of regnance ran

Unto the hither sea; his thoughts sped on
Across the sun-kissed waves and dwelt upon
The fortunes of the lucky brothers twain
And Rubruquis and more whose deeds were vain
Because the hated Turk usurped the Orient;
Upon the western skies his hopes were set and bent.

XI.

Scant was the bread he won, and hard the toil
Of many askings; you might surely deem
The country would not unresponsive seem
That bore the Prince of Seamen and whose spoil
Of treasures won with strength no storm could foil
Called his work hers who passed the haunted cape
To distant Calicut; but the stern coil
Of sharp denial gave no sure escape
From its coercive prison;
The light was not arisen
Upon his weary darkness; many an ape
Of dullard greatness would yet grin and gape
Upon the calm severity that held
Its course unshaken, patient, and unquelled,
Scorning the Portuguese device which basely sought
To grasp the certain prize and bring his life to naught.

XII.

But Love looked on his eager step and brow
And sang him melodies to lull and cheer
His bitter waiting; children blithe and dear
Climbed on his knee, and made the time allow

A respite from the deep and mastering vow;
Nobly formed was he, strong and large of frame,
The potent eye clear with light to endow
A darkling multitude; the furrows came
Full early and the face
Revealed across its space
The unresting purpose and the mind of flame;
A vigorous soul that saw the heights of fame,
Being part of large intents; and if at last
Love in another guise beside him passed,
Be sure heaven frowned not on that simple paradise
Nor gazed upon it with stern unrelenting eyes.

XIII.

Moreover when he claimed the right to rule
The realms he found and portions of the store
Of riches they gave up, what did he more
Than emphasize the part he played? The cool
Winds of the morning sweeping o'er the pool,
That seeks to hold the sunrise on its breast,
Capricious, wayward, yet are not the fool
To yield one atom of the waters' best
Which they believe is theirs;
No flower the summer bears
But calls the sun his own, and the wide west
In days to come should each with the all invest;
He was the master of the islands far,
He was the late and slowly rising star,
Beneath which burst their beauty from the darkness' thrall,
And he of right was ruler and great admiral.

XIV.

Forth fared he from the land that knew him not
And sought the region of brave-voiced romance,
About which all the wingèd seasons dance
In lyric joyance, Spain, whose lofty lot
Was to conclude the conflict unforgot;
Again the sense-steeped and luxurious creed
That rose in Asia, bred amid her hot
And desert sands, contended with the need
For nobler self-possession,
And spirit's free confession
Of firm allegiance to the truth whose meed
Is to obtain the will and strength to bleed
For those who toil and mourn; great-hearted Spain,
Fronting the expectant and sonorous main,
Had the keen sight to pierce the mists which overhung
The outer ocean, taught by the unfearing tongue

XV.

That had made Europe hear the constant story;
She bent at first a sombre deep surprise
Upon the whitened hair and anxious eyes;
Her sages and her counselors, old and hoary,
Sat gazing from their wisdom's promontory
Steadfastly seaward, but a shadow lay
Upon the outlook's still invisible glory,
And they believed not in the nearing day;
But there were those who felt
The mystery that dwelt

In his firm words, the prince, of amplest sway,
Medina-Celi, and, keen in the fray,
The third king of the realm, Mendoza, priest
And statesman, with the Queen's advisers, least
Inclined to marvels, Santangel, Quintanilla strong,
And the imperious Marchioness whose life's rich song

XVI.

Answered his own; but now the Crescent pale
Shrank behind clouds of war, and the pure Queen
Held victory grasped; at Santa Fe were seen
The royal armament whose stern avail
Shattered the Saracen kingdom and saw quail
The Oriental life before the sweep
Of nobleness that dwelt behind the mail
Of lords and knights; for them the moving deep
Held regions secret yet
But where their bold hopes set
Should come to sight in forms wherein the leap
Of impulse might find joyance and still keep
Friendship with law that fetters and makes free;
For them ere long the sun's unloosened sea
Should flow round Moorish towers wherefrom burns forth the cross,
Symbol of hope and love that grow and know not loss.

XVII.

But not to you, O Europe, came the task
To build the commonweal that shall endure
And ever brighten till its action pure

Grows even as time itself must seek and ask;
Power knew not what was hidden behind the mask
The ages wove for it to wear, strong Love,
That throws from off its brow the glittering casque,
And fills the world with the clear light thereof;
They built the narrow cell
Wherein the accents fell
Of Judges whom no mildness of the dove
Kept from the serpent's keenness; forth they drove
The patient wisdom of a people sad
With the unfinished pain their drear past had,
And whom the New World, too, should free from the dark doom
Which wove around them centuries of grief and gloom.

XVIII.

Thus the past clutched the throat of wise intent,
And murdered Spain when her hand held the keys
To unlock the future's happier mysteries;
And the defeated Moor saw once more bent
The nations at the shrine from whence are sent
Soul-slaying vapors and a shuddering dread
Of lordly deeds for which all time is meant.
Europe had a long weary path to tread
Unto that far seen goal
For which the New World sole
Waited, and unto which her life is wed;
O gray discoverer there among the dead,
Or those whose unsealed eyes behold the all,
Great Sailor and the Future's Admiral,

You see what land you found—not Asia's mere decay,
But the Achievement's best, and gold of the New Day!

XIX.

Yet had his sun not risen; from his lips
Fell in swift fervid accents his desire,
And Talavera's eyes of smouldering fire
Shone with a myriad doubts, a dark eclipse
Of faith hung round him, and the longed-for ships
Ploughed but the ocean of his star-lit dreams;
Time had not tried his soul enough with whips
And scorns, for so the rigid Master deems
He makes his servants fit
For the hard toils which knit
The perfect garment, firm and without seams,
The world shall wear at last; his hurt brain teems
With indignation and he turns away
Undaunted, and he girds him for the fray
Once more; but first he hears the words of his good friend,
Marchena, strong with trust in the far-shining end.

XX.

His wanderings reached at last the lonely door
Of La Rabida; there the silence came
Grateful upon his grief's consuming flame;
The simple cloisters gave him peace once more
And the live ocean rolled up to the shore
Its ceaseless voice of promise; through the pines
The sun looked down benignant, and the roar
Of the far world of rivalries declines

Into an inward murmur,
With each day growing firmer,
Whose sense is conquest at the last; as shines
A lamp across a rocky path's confines
Making the outlet clear, Juan Perez' faith,
Who heard him and conceived his words no wraith
Of fevered fancy but the very truth, was light
To bring the Queen to know his purposes aright.

XXI.

O noble priest and friend! you reached the court
And turned the Queen from conquest's mid career
To hearken; other triumphs glittered clear
Before her, and again from Huelva's port
The seeker came; he saw Granada's fort
Open its gates reluctant, and the king,
El Zogoibi, bewail his bitter sort
And loss which made the rich *Te Deums* ring
When on La Vela's tower
The cross bloomed like a flower
Of heaven's own growing; but the sudden spring,
Loud with birds silent long that strove to sing,
After the winter's weary voiceless reign,
Was overcast with storms of cold disdain;
Haughtily forth he fared and reached Granada's gates
When the clouds lifted and the persecuting fates

XXII.

Relented from their fury; for the Queen
Listened unto the urgings manifold

Of Santangel, and counsel, wise and bold,
Of the far-seeing Marchioness, whose keen
Divinings pierced the misty ocean's screen
And felt the deed must surely come to pass;
So they recalled him, and his life's changed scene
Grew bright with blooms and smile of thickening grass;
O royal woman then
Your hand received again
The keys of a great realm; in the clear glass
Of actions yet to be whose fires amass
Infinite stores of impulse toward the good,
Your image permanent lies; forth from the wood
Of beasts malicious and the unrelenting dread
You showed the way, but sought not from the gloom to tread.

XXIII.

The wind was fair, the ships lay in the bay,
And the blue sky looked down upon the earth;
Prophetic time laughed toward the nearing birth
Of the strong child with whom should come a day
That dulled all earlier hours. Forth on the way
With holy blessings said, and bellied sails,
And mounting joy that knows not let nor stay!
Lo! the undaunted purpose never fails!
O patient master, seer,
For whom the far is near,
The vision true, and the mere present pales
Its lustre, what mild seas and blossomed vales
Awaited you? haply a paradise
But not the one which drew your swerveless eyes;

Could you have known what lands were there beyond the
main,
You surelier would have turned to gladsomeness from pain.

XXIV.

Light-bearer! this did you hope indeed to be,
Freeing the holy tomb from dominance base
And cleansing earth's bent brow from dark disgrace;
Waited not Prester John across the sea
With eager sons under his canopy
Of gold and on his emerald-studded throne?
Wealth should you have and wide-spread empery
To bring bowed hearts to Truth who heard their moan
And made it yours to lift
The heavy clinging drift
From their sad days, the many hearts who lone
And anguished suffered falsehood's monotone;
Such was your dream, O strong deliverer!
But your achievement infinite-mightier
Planted the tree of Freedom in its foredoomed soil
And wrested from old Ill the remnant of his spoil.

XXV.

What room for cold detraction's voice? What gain
In finding weakness where so much of strength
Reached the far end it sought so long at length?
Grant that his soul had here and there a stain,
The splendor of his deed must still remain
The clear avouchment of his manhood's height;
That cannot be the truth which would constrain

The mind to dull details and hold from sight
The life that is the whole
Vision; the mists uproll
From the wide landscape and the generous light
Bathes in its affluence hill and stream; the night
Seeks its lair far beyond the glowing earth;
Here is the joy of daring and of worth;
If mists cling to the trees or thin clouds yet obscure,
We ask not in the day's impendence white and pure.

XXVI.

Two worlds, from the beginning sundered, flow
Into the stream that is the planet's life,
A strength showing sweet peace brought forth of strife;
The giant winds upon their wanderings go
From the grim lands of changeless iron snow
Unto the climes where rules the centred sun,
And everywhere the exulting nations know
That their approaching Destiny is one;
This hath the Sea-King wrought
Whose forward leaping thought
Felt that man's victory was but half way done
Unless both realms were intimately won
Unto the mighty goodness which is God
And Lord of History's utmost period;
His hand conjoined the parted continents once for all,
He looked for land and lo! a nobler spirit-fall!

III.

THE DEED.

To cross the seas of life, naught suffices save the bark of faith. In that bark the undoubting Columbus set sail, and at his journey's end found a new world. Had that world not then existed, God would have created it in the solitude of the Atlantic, if to no other end than to reward the faith and constancy of that great man.

EMILIO CASTELAR.

THE DEED.

I.

Reach but the heights of truth and every star
Trembles and shines for aims you seek and love;
The winds become the pursuivants thereof,
Their blare triumphant heralds you afar;
No danger can affright, no power can bar
The stern endeavor leagued with very thought,
The impassioned hope that is right's avatar
And sees its substance surely wrought
Into the web of time;
He breathes the superb clime
Of certain victory, who, borne by naught
From the pursuit his loftiest dreams have sought,
Follows the rocky path, however steep,
Which lovers of mankind perceive and keep;
All forces of the land and sea and air conspire
To bring to pass what feeds eternity's desire.

II.

The soft acclaim of heaven accompanies
The advent of the hero on the earth;
Nothing of wonder may attest his worth
Or break upon and shake the revelries
Of arrogant pleasure which concludes not his

To ring the knell of what it holds most dear;
But where the secret place of potence is,
And where the heart of life beats high and clear,
The light's intenser glow
And joy's superber flow
Betoken triumph gainst the ancient fear;
The night is sorely stricken and her drear
Control is nearly over; every stream
Speeds with new strength in the sun's strenuous stream.
Defeat beholds with dark chagrin how all his skill
Of strange undoing served to work the sovereign will.

III.

Now the swift hours seemed friendly; everywhere
Smiled portents of success to the emprise
Which looked for sunrise where the low day dies
Into the seas incarnadine; to dare
Was certain conquest; earth was all aware
Of the endeavor, and her heart was thrilled
With mighty impulse that her son should fare
Straight to the doom she long had loved and willed;
He was the very mid
Of the intentions hid
Within her bosom till her hands had spilled
Enough of marvels and the unfulfilled
Desires of her bold manchild sought the realms
Beyond the sea with courage-governed helms
Where he could build anew, free from the past's grim wrong,
A home his soul might dwell in, life's last burst of song.

IV.

Now the winds rose from out the storied east,
Freighted with all the perfumed memories
That murmured in their brains like happy bees
Seeking the hives wherein the store increased
Of earth's best products was set for the feast
Whereby all men recline and each is king;
The light wind freshened while the monk and priest
Watched from his height the vessels vanishing;
The sea was fair as youth,
The wind was firm as truth,
The cloven waters with a swish and swing
Around the ship's sides seemed to close and sing;
The known shores faded and the speeding days
Brought them unto the skyward-reaching blaze
Of islanded sheer Teneriffe that pierced the night
With its sharp cone and thrilled the unaccustomed sight.

V.

Forth into unknown seas! and who shall say
What keel clove those forgetful waves before?
Had the dark-haired and slim Phoenician's prore
Seen creaming from its thrust the fitful play
Of those unraging waters? or the way
Been conscious of the Greekish mariner
Whose fancy wantoned in the golden day
Of lost Atlantis? or the storm and stir
Of an obscure unrest
Driven a king from blest

And firm-built power to see through misted blur
Strange coasts arise and many an islander?
The smoothly-slipping rippled element
Seemed false-benignant in its calm consent;
What vague forebodings held their inmost hearts appalled
When sea was all that shone upon their sight enthralled?

VI.

The sky above them glittered clear and pure,
The vast horizons scarcely shut them in;
Had the strange path an end? was theirs to win
A shore beyond that solitude? Secure
In the far-stretching distance lay the lure
Which siren-wise laughed in the present calm?
Or did the silver monotone endure
Until its splendor ached, and the fierce qualm
Wrought madness in the brain?
Farther upon the plain
Of liquid lucence and no sign of balm
Unto the growing fear and lifted palm;
Held the same law in the same certain strength
The new and old? or was change here at length?
These treacherous waves perchance rolled on no human shore,
And vaguely westward was the infinite's opened door?

VII.

A broken mast tossed loose from wave to wave!
A sign from the as yet unfathomed sea
And menace to their rash temerity!

For who might bind her as a willing slave
To his devisings? was she not one grave
Pellucid, fragrant, lambent everywhere,
Covetous of life and impotent to save?
Still the quick birds were fearless and the air
Upbore their flutterings,
And the increasing rings
Of their large flight portended something fair.
Pelican, tunny fish, aught that could bear
A happy presage woke a fleeting thrill
Of the old hope which dimmed and lessened still;
What might survive upon the stretching lone expanse
Save the light tribes of air, and fishes' darting dance?

VIII.

But lo! the sea became a tangled mass,
A floating meadow of unnameable weeds,
A sterile growth answering no man's needs,
A demon-fashioned obstacle to pass,
A moving desert covered with strange grass,
Another horror which the water spawns,
That aggregate of drops more clear than glass,
But hiding in its clearness fifty dawns
Of ominous miracle,
An ever variant spell
Which while it brings to sight its wrecks, yet fawns
Upon its victims; through the yielding lawns,
Starred with red berries like dull spots of fire,
That were the signs of its condign desire,
They cut their way at last, but now the winds were still;
What next? when would the sea's wild fancy have its will?

IX.

Drifting slowly unto their doom; the glow
Of the smooth waters to the silent right,
Leftwards the shine of the unvarying light,
Into the very void they seemed to go;
No hand with land the wastes had laughed to sow;
There was around them a crystalline peace,
That grew more weird than night when storm-winds blow;
They might turn backwards and thus gain release,
But who could surely feel
That the reversèd keel
Might not find gulfs where even time would cease?
At night the burnished stars with soft increase
Of flame made the far reaches visible;
They were a-float within a widening dell
Of death's sheer imminence; even as a flaw is found
Dimming and shadowy inside a diamond's round.

X.

Wherefore had shone the baleful light on high?
The meteor that fell from its steep place
And hissing met the sea's uplifted space?
Were the stars fixed in yonder high-domed sky?
And whence did the unchanging breezes fly?
Hard sailing in the teeth of winds; and Spain,
Fair land of memories, both arm and eye
Of Europe, like a dream at morn that vain
And fragile passed and sped,
Or soul mixed with the dead

And mounting upward to unfleeting gain,
Would hardly greet them more beyond the plain
Of sinuous waves into whose spell they swept;
Here all was other; not even the needle kept
Her truth in the mad realms; yet better to be lost
On the track homewards than on this grim sin be tost.

XI.

But the Commander swerved not from his trust,
His prayers were answered while he uttered them,
His eyes were fixed beyond the sunset's hem,
And the fates surely could not be unjust;
His thoughts were truth itself, and so there must
Rise from the deeps an answer clear and meet;
He calmed the sailors' dreads and often thrust
Their glooms aside with foregleams of the feat
Which all time should record
Their braveries' fit award;
His skill pictured for them the town and street
Wherethrough the Khan life, fierce and golden, beat;
What fear of fire stones falling from above?
He knew them well; besides the tomb of Love
Who died for men must needs have freeing; Holy Writ
Sanctioned their distant search and prophesied of it.

XII.

Yet the fierce anguish of the homeless waste
Grew stronger, and they rose in scorn and hate
Against their chief, whose madness, soon or late,
Must bring the doom which they so long had faced

Half helplessly; they would, no more disgraced
And shamedly hearkening his obscure behests,
Feel their firm wits by his crazed dreams displaced,
Nor seek these wests eked out by farther wests;
And if death came, alack!
It should be on the track
Homewards; let him go forth on dangerous quests
With those unweeting that his interests
Were not the heaven's, but intense search for gold
Of which low-breathèd secrets had been told
Into his ear by lying pilots who had been
But a short way upon the ocean's swirl and sin.

XIII.

The Admiral heard their loud complaints and called
Unto the ships accompanying his;
In solemn council all their miseries
Were spoken and the demon deep unwalled
Tossed round them; then the Pinzon unappalled
Voiced the great need from off the swaying deck
And for a brief time held them disenthralled,
Obedient to their Master's word and beck;
"Señor, some two or three
Of these might feed the sea;
And if the hangman's office seem a fleck
Upon you which you love not, they shall reck
Not long of mere delay; my brother here
And I will bear down on them swiftly, cheer
Their dark despair, and land them in another world!
The flag we bear is but above success unfurled!"

XIV.

They cowered abashed and the touched Admiral said:
"A few days more we will our course pursue
And the near hour will give the land to view;
Such do I deem the present likelihead;
But if these last few hours are fully sped
And only sky and water greet us, I
Will change the sailing by your longings led."
Then Pinzon once more raised his voice and high
Above the wind and wave
Sounded the message brave:
"Forward! Forward! Forward!" a clarion cry
Circling around between the sea and sky.
Whatever deeds darkened your latter days,
That courage lifts you, Pinzon, past all praise;
Your haughty spirit gave its fire when needed most,
And to those dauntless words reached forth the enamored coast!

XV.

And later came the cry of land—perchance
Because we often see the thing we long
To see—and the wan Admiral raised the song
Gloria in Excelsis—and his glance
Wandered afar where the lit ripples dance;
Lo! there it lay, purple and dim, a cloud
Hardening to shore with the full-sailed advance;
So they all hoped with their pale faces bowed
And eyes straining and fierce
Into the depths to pierce;

Continent was it? or a thick-set crowd
Of islands? the close flight of birds avowed
The nearing rest and harbor—thick they came,
Fluttered and chattered without let or blame;
Alack! the land sank back into the abysses there;
The sighing waves beneath and round them nought but air!

XVI.

Even the great heart faltered and at night
He sat upon the deck and felt the gloom
Falling around him like a mighty doom;
The faint glow on the waters left and right
Hurt his tense mood and something shut his sight,
And whether sleep or waking he knew not,
Or whether it was dark or full of light,
Or whether earth or other holier spot;
But a voice softly spake,
Nor did the silence break;
"Have I not led you? have you too forgot
How from your childhood I have made your lot
Mine own, and filled your life with me, and gave
You toils I needed in my toils to save
Man from himself? And do you doubt and tremble now?
Nay, fear not! Lo! my certain morning girds your brow!"

XVII.

He woke as one who might return from death
Unto the scenes he knew beneath the sun
And to far heights his thoughts began to run;
His dreams flew past the bounds where tarrieth

The mind of men, and over him the breath
Of the Terrestrial Paradise sped soft,
And he heard waking what the sweet mouth saith
Of the pure Mother who sits throned aloft
And crowned by her own Son;
Her radiant smile had won
His heart to deep allegiance and had oft
Shone on his darkness and his soul had doffed
Its sadness; he could wait for many a morn
With this clear vision; frequent when the scorn
Had seemed too much to bear, he had heard murmurs beat
Within him, and he would the mystic tones repeat

XVIII.

Even like the fiery thunderous ones of old
Who spoke what heaven itself poured through their lips,
Striving to ward their country's near eclipse;
Ah, if the obscure Future had unrolled
The stately pageant which she held in fold
Of dimness, how his full heart must have leapt
Unto the Hesperian Freedom's morning gold;
He would have known that his straight voyage kept
The road to Paradise
Indeed, which earthly eyes
Should see, and the salt tears which time had wept
Must feel assuaged, for the Republic slept
Her antenatal slumber and light fell
Beneath her trembling eyelids, her *All's Well!*
Would ring above the expectant lands, and the last birth
Of national powers arise in stature of her worth.

XIX.

Perhaps some forefeel of his latter days
Came over him, Fonseca's tireless hate,
And all the ills that oft on greatness wait,
And hardships of triumphant rugged ways;
And further on the world-wide lamping blaze
Of gratitude which circled his bright name;
His last doubts vanished and his gaze
Swept the wide ocean; he could bear the blame
Of the dull halting men,
Who would withhold again
The world from its advancement, and their shame
Should be his answer when the victory came;
He had not failed to hear when his thought spoke,
He had not failed to read what message broke
Upon him when the outer life was quieted
And his deep heart and deeper truth were inly wed.

XX.

Was that a new star in the purple West?
Golden and flickering, quenched and full of fire,
Like an uncertain strengthening desire?
It glows above the uttermost dark crest
Of waters; O mysterious palimpsest
Of the round skies. will you not utter clear
The secret you have shrouded terriblest
Amid the weltering ocean's vast and fear?
Is yonder flame the key
Unto the mystery?
The last word in the message darkling here

Which fills the meaning out, repaying drear
And dim-eyed watching and grim anguishing
Of the tense soul that now may rise and sing
Its rich-voiced paean and the heart awake once more
Into the joy of life from over-cloudings sore?

XXI.

Is it a star? its lambent tremulousness
Melts in the dark around it! now it pales
And its soft lustre droops and faints and fails;
It breaks anew! it comes like a caress
From regions of divinest blessedness!
"Pedro Gutierrez, turn your sight afar!
What is yon shining oi the floating tress?"
"I mark the pale far radiance of a star!"
"Oh, look again, again,
And call the next of men!
Rodrigo of Segovia, past the bar
Of many waves see you what flashings are?"
"Nay, good your grace, I see naught but the dark!"
Forth leaps to leeward the adventurous bark!
Lo! there! It shines again! Master, it grows more bright!
All men upon your knees! It is a light!—a light!

IV.

THE NEW WORLD.

Come thou whole self of Latter Man!
Come o'er thy realm of Good-and-Ill,
And do, thou Self that sayest, *I can*,
And love, thou Self that sayest, *I will;*
And prove and know Time's worst and best,
Thou tall young Adam of the West!

LANIER.

THE NEW WORLD.

I.

Eastward the dawn and to the west lay land;
Oh not Cathay, but a more virgin soil,
And waiting for the newer faith and toil,
Responsive to a more august command;
Nor here where breezes blew serene and bland
And the warm sun enlarged from labors rude,
Upon this river-fed and fruitful strand
Where nothing harsh or stern dared to intrude,
Was the fair dome to rise,
But under cloudier skies,
In which the nobler reach and larger mood
Should find themselves drawn on and subtly wooed
To make their dwelling with the whole of man,
Moulded unto the dream wherein began
The passion of his life, for from no lesser source,
Flowed the wide stream of hope and urged its deepening course.

II.

Once more a portent shone in Germany;
For there the Great Reformer rose and stood
Firm-poised and strong against a very wood

Of opposition; no more should there be
A wall betwixt the soul and verity;
In the wide spiritual realms there was no king
Save God; life's effort had not been to free
Mankind for the vain later end to bring
Upon it servitude
To a power once imbued
With the pure love wherewith the seasons sing,
But now athirst for rule, and carrying
Base pomp into the sanctuary's mid;
He could no other do than he was bid
By the deep voice within, and spirit's rich domain,
Seen by the eye of faith, lay clear revealed and plain.

III.

Also the soul confronted in its might
The shows of all the world, and dared to say
That there was naught beneath the eye of day
Which fell not in its province, and its right
To judge what truth was came not from the light
Flickering alone in cloisters; every man
Stood in the hall of Good, and his own sight
Read the true message that on high began;
The young strong cities rose,
And yet another close
Of music through the deepening chorus ran,
And peaceful toil pressed forward in the van;
The castles frowned upon their rough hill sides,
And the hurt villein looked upon the rides
Of glittering lords and ladies with a half despair,
Then left the plough and sought the city's freer air.

IV.

Through the rapt ages sped the dream and grew
More certain with the pregnant flight of time
And set the seasons in a richer rhyme;
From every star that shone and wind that blew
The intelligence came, and all men surely knew
That the deep self was height and lucid peak
From whence the landscape took proportion due,
And justice was the good they were to seek;
Mere trust in rule was dead,
And it had basely led
Into the gardens withered now and bleak
Wherein too long mad kings had joyed to wreak
Their wanton fancies and their wild caprice
On men whose hands had given long life and lease
To crime and shamelessness; the flame-lit end was here;
Each man decreed himself, and sovereigned all the sphere.

V.

The thunder rolled above impetuous France,
The earth shook in the storm, and savage cries
Of the roused nations answered to the skies;
The thrones of Europe trembled, and the lance
Of Freedom clove the darkness with the glance
Of its divine illumination, yet
Too fierce and strenuous was the grim advance,
And by too many foes self-made beset;
So Victory spurned the earth
As of too little worth
For her long dwelling; and the ground was wet

With curdling dews the ways would fain forget;
The scornful sun looked down in pain and wrath
On lands that trod the new-old hateful path;
A sigh came from the seas, and everywhere was heard
The cry, "How long, O Freedom, is your reign deferred!"

VI.

O sunset land! to you the days have given
The noblest labor, the severest meed,
The Consummation and the Mighty Deed!
You shall from all cast off the manacles riven
In the sad past, and time's old sorrows driven
Before like leaves upon the autumn blast,
And memories of crimes and wrongs unshriven,
In the fierce light that your clear eyes will cast,
Must seek the open grave
From which no later wave
Of shame or folly can revive them; fast
Shall they lie there until a springtime vast
Sweeps over them and makes them part of life
That has arisen full-sinewed from the strife,
Your surging life, O Mother, triumph-voiced and great,
Shaper of man's firm welfare, Builder of the State!

VII.

What have you not that kisses of the sun
Delight to fondle? waters, large and fair,
And golden regions of the variant air;
Both oceans find their daily loves undone
Unless their songs within your ears are spun;

Your mountains soar above you, calm and tall,
And lure until their silences have won
Your hearts to spiritual heights which hold and thrall;
Your prairies like a bride
Laugh to the blue skies wide
With their abundance; no fate can befall
You save the further rich behest and call
Of wisdomed bringing what you have in fee
Unto all lands, mild peace and liberty,
And nobler beauty, purer song, and juster sight
Of the deep secrets hid within the Infinite Light!

VIII.

O stern-browed Heroine far across the sea,
Your daughter knows your blood within her veins,
And hearkens to the ever-ringing strains
Your voice has poured to honor Liberty;
Her have you worshiped and you still must be
Helper and guide upon the luminous way;
What you have done to make the nations free,
Believing ever in the sun-filled day
That shall pervade at length
Mankind in all its strength,
Named you the first of those for whom the play
Of forces bringing triumph sped the ray
Of the result divine; we feel you here
Within us, and the hour cannot appear,
O England, which will not turn youwards and repeat
How your grand life's stream flows within us pure and sweet.

IX.

The secret found at last! obedience
To nothing alien but the very God
Fluent throughout the majestic period;
The soul of man and life one stream whose whence
Is in the light of Good's pre-eminence;
The heart of each co-equal with the whole
That round it flows in joyous turbulence;
The soul of man one self-divided soul,
Whose parts innumerous are
Conjoined as light to star,
A star whose beams around it speed and roll,
Each beam all light and true as steel to pole
Unto its source of pure yet mixèd flame,
Each beam all light reflected to the same
Glory and fervor whence its dreams have ever been,
And fleeting back from being's utmost verge and sin!

X.

O heart of time and secret of the world
Revealed at last beneath the happy sun,
O wide-branched blossom of the ages won
Into vast growth, since the first dew lay pearled
Upon the first leaf to the light uncurled,
Since sense of spiritual search was anywhere,
You have gleamed forth, and ray by ray unfurled
Your crescent shining to the ambient air;
Now we behold you sure,
The spirit and the lure
Of all endeavor, not a mere nation fair,

Not one bright flower, but, clustered rich and rare,
A flower of flowers, a petalled sisterhood,
The torch-like centre of the heavy wood
Of history, giving light upon the living past
And chiefest glow on upward-leading pathways cast!

XI.

In days of Greece whose eyes prophetic saw
The spiritual sphere disclosed, and whose life rose
With youthful ardor past the wizard shows
Of sense into that region of clear awe,
A flower of states whose petals drank the law
Of one strong stem half stayed the night which fell
Too soon, and charmed the savage winds from flaw,
Nearing its burst, to silence; but too well
For the rathe hour was planned
The interlinked command;
Also the mountaineers who feel the spell
Of their wild land's enchanting miracle
Have woven a light of rule whose distinct hues
Conjoined have been a beacon to diffuse
A hope among the watchers that the delaying morn
Would surely come when the Republic should be born.

XII.

Now the Republic has indeed beheld
The vapors vanish from the western seas,
And day's young magic flash across the leas
Which the rapt fancy of the climes of eld
Longed for and prayed; those tense desires unquelled

By disappointment, merciless defeat,
Have sprung from every overthrow to weld
Anew the dream for which their passion beat;
Of the Discoverer's heart
Those purposes had part,
And led him forth with unexhausted heat
To make strong Europe's hope the New World's feat;
What the worn past has been anhungered for,
Holding all action its sure servitor,
The form of rule to whose large beauty men must kneel
Appears, a State of States, the Nationed Commonweal!

XIII.

Not tower but city crowned is your grand brow,
Your limbs prodigious in the strength of youth,
And in your eyes the awfulness of truth,
Not mail-clad, bringer of the olive-bough,
Holy and tender, with lips sweet from vow
Of help to all men in all continents,
And gracious hands of blessing to endow
With life the hopes to which all time consents;
The thunder of the mirth
Of the awakening earth
Hailed you from mountains with their snowy tents,
And utmost shores the scarce-sailed sea indents;
At night the passion of the stars looked down
And laughed to see you, and the sombre frown
That gloomed the past-rid lands faded in joy which came
From you, O mightiest-thewed, and source of spiritual flame!

XIV.

Yet was the struggle hard; not a mere gift
Is the great strength which leads to masterdom;
Wisdom and just assurance only come
With victory over sordid ills that drift
Around us, and the courages that lift
Into the high are their own best reward.
The agonies were hers which burn and sift,
And her blind powers sometimes held vain accord
With those whose scornful boast
Was that they harmed her most;
Around her beat the many-headed horde
Of envy, malice, hatred, and self-scored
She lay with bleeding wounds; the battle's rage
But made her firmer, and the dearer wage
Of nobler reverence, self-control, and sight of good,
Was hers as she emerged from that dense earlier wood.

XV.

One stain remained upon her brow, the mark
Of sin against the soul of brotherhood;
She who was Freedom's, what fate abject could
Ally her with the baser crew whose dark
Control plucked selfhood from the crouched and stark
Corrupted ones, debased from man to thing,
And wreaking on their sterile brains the cark
And care which are the signs of travailing
With birth of loftier will?
Yet the hour came to spill
Upon the ground her life-blood and to bring

Her dearest to the altar that the spring
Might be spring unto all; with forehead bare,
Washed clean of the defilement, miracle-fair,
She stands, the shadow in her eyes of anguish fled,
Strengthened and conscious of herself, her hopes, her dead!

XVI.

But newer griefs assail her, lust of gold,
The greed that would have all the world its own
And silences its ear to sound of moan
Falling from lips of victim, savage hold
Of temporal goods, that grows an uncontrolled
And never-ending madness, these grim ills
Sprang up around her, taunting, scornful, bold;
Whither have fled the stern and potent wills
Who knew to curb the brood
Of evil-doers rude?
Shine forth with glance of perfect scorn which kills,
O Titaness, and from the hand that tills
These monstrous fields, strike the ill gotten gain,
Be loud upon them and transform, restrain,
Show forth the double crime, the land nor grows nor lives,
Which learns not how to steer 'twixt such alternatives.

XVII.

Why should the hungry poor groan in your borders,
And toil raise gaunt and angry hands of appeal
For wiser guerdon from the commonweal?
Shall you be blamed like those whom the recorders
Write in the Book of Grief as vain awarders

Of the great good which is the lot of all?
Nay, Mother, help; surely your deep skill orders
Your realm so that the noblest issues fall
Unto your diverse sons?
What lack of memory runs
Through your tense soul that you should fail to call
Your note of warning through your land's wide hall?
Graceless to grasp for more than is of use,
And give to greed a limitless abuse;
Find way to make your equal sons by right and law
Partakers of yourself and sharers of your awe!

XVIII.

Lo! at the portal stands the Angel Love,
The morning of her presence casts before
An opulent radiance from shore to shore,
Responsive to the light of life above,
And the roused land grows cognizant thereof;
She stands upon the threshold, she would serve
What her dear heart can yearn for not enough,
Fair sights from which her firm eyes will not swerve;
She would cast out forever
The demon who can sever
The hands of men, make her own life the nerve
Of all familiar acts, hold in its curve
Of gracious ascent deeds and strong desires,
Tread under foot fast smouldering envy's fires,
Withhold from grasp of aught that better feeds another
The strength that is in truth as name to all a brother.

XIX.

The land thrills with an impulse as of spring,
New fountains bubble underneath the soil,
New dreams of peace float through the night of toil,
New melodies begin to soar and sing
Within the regions of grim suffering;
Unto a newer height the goddess leads,
Where brighter blooms their sweeter fragrance fling
Over warm reaches of benignant meads;
The path before us dim
Lies in the twilight's rim;
Soon the new sun will cast from him the weeds
That yet enshroud him, and a day that breeds
A deeper love vanquish the dark anew,
A spiritual day with skies of singing blue,
A sea of spirit isled with souls around whom flow
The everlasting streams full of meridian glow.

XX.

Fronting the abyss with smile and brow serene,
The new man comes, self-poised, self-equal, firm,
Not held within the narrowing senses' term,
Not bound in chains of things but touched and seen;
Faith opens outlooks past the vaporous screen
Of time, and the whole world lies bathed in light;
His courage is uplifting and his keen
Ardors endow the weak with his life's height;
The stars, his charioteers,
Bring truths from utmost spheres;
All fears lie dead before him, thought and might

Obey him, and his sun is love and right;
Victory calls him hers, and lofty joy,
The night and day vicissitudes employ
For him, the sea and air are subject to his nod,
And his divining eyes gaze up and look on God!

XXI.

Here in these waiting days I raise my song,
Catching far gleams from what is sure to be;
As one who hears the unsighted sónorous sea,
And the live pulses in him fiercely long
To mix with those glad pulses and the strong
World-circling flow, I reach forth to the hour
When subjugate the old tyranny of wrong
Will range itself beside love's conquering power:
These accents poor and faint
But dimly limn and paint
The centuries-crescent aloe in mid flower;
Ah, that a poet of the supreme dower,
A poet such as earlier periods had,
Or full-voiced singer as will surely glad
The expanses of the future would build up the theme,
And fashion forth the wonder of the truthful dream!

XXII.

Be glad, O land, fling your bright banners free,
Rejoice as never land rejoicèd yet,
All injuries forgive, all woes forget,
Send your acclaim from summer sea to sea,
Here at this tide happy and proud are we!

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The one white Radiance punctually endows
The creatures everywhere with his own life,
And joy which hath calm purity for wife
Shines in the many-gated city when the song
Resounds to greet each wayworn and victorious throng.

XXVI.

And Supreme Thought who calls the world her own,
And passes things and life in full review,
And gains the old truth that is ever new,
Freedom's best guide and counselor hath grown;
There are no fields which her seed hath not sown,
There are no heights which her feet may not climb,
There are no dreams which must not hers be known,
There are no glooms for her in any time;
Arranger of all life,
And mistress over strife,
She sets the stars in melody and rhyme,
And makes the periods with each other chime;
Pouring her hopes into the dark recesses,
Thridding her way through the vague wildernesses,
She fashions, rules, designs, and dwells within the light,
Which is the heart of hearts, and very sight of sight,

XXVII.

O fair republics of the warmer sun,
O sister states rejoice amid your flowers,
And take with us the higher-hearted hours
That point to destinies but half begun
And grandeurs from the urgent future won;

Join hands with us in this our triumph tide,
Send forth the tones in deep-based unison
With Freedom's chorus which is close allied
To the rapt song that springs
From planetary rings;
Here on the stormy ocean's hither side
We all will say that room must be denied
To aught that savors of a king or crown;
And you, our sister, underneath the frown
Of colder skies, take part in our mid revelry,
And greeting send to her across the southern sea!

XXVIII.

Into the future one more forward glance!
Raise your great brows, O Titaness, and call
Over to Europe's millions; let from your lips fall
The sound that bursts the agonizing trance,
The message that evokes the swift advance;
Bid war disarm, and cast his helmet down
And show within his wrathless eyes' expanse
The love which lurks behind his fleeting frown;
Bring nearer the glad hour
Of congregated power!
Speed you the federated world, the crown
Of time's endeavor! speed! so hill and town
May answer back the rich intelligence,
The song that ravishes both soul and sense,
The friendship of the nations, and the end attained
For which the tears were shed, the ground with blood was stained!

XXIX.

And those who are the ages' children yet,
The wandering tribes who vaguely dream and brood,
Held in the bondage of an earth-born mood,
By foes within and foes without beset,
Let not the pity of the world forget;
Shed light through their grim darkness and uplift
To generous manhood; where the woods are wet
With dew that is not morning's tremulous gift,
Bring strength and lamplike peace
Whose lustre must increase
Over the earth; with footsteps light and swift
Let the soft influence fleet; into the drift
Lead the cleansed streams of hope and trust and thought
Until the conquest is more surely wrought,
And love and good fulfill the time, and everywhere
A freeman raises hand and brow unto the air!

XXX.

One vision more! the spiritual city lies
Beneath the sun; the all-subduing love
Inhabits there as in the realms above;
As lordly as the blue unclouded skies
Life passes, and the mighty dawn's surmise
Reaches completion, and the deeps on deeps
Of spirit which are seen alone of eyes
Whose watch is kin to power that never sleeps
Are more and more revealed;
The inmost heavens unsealed
Comfort the heart where no more anguish weeps,

And open fields which faith forever reaps;
The truth shines everywhere and strenuous right
Souls every deed with its transcendent light;
The winds are song itself, the hours are radiance-fleet,
And fear of death is not, and every toil is sweet!

XXXI.

God's thought rose clear before him and he said;
"Lo! I have fashioned for mine eyes to see,
The mighty miracle of Liberty;
Unto my will have many wills been wed,
With mine own light have lesser lives been fed,
With mine own being filled and wondrous fire,
The increasing light by which their hearts are led
Unto the summit of all deep desire;
From glowering suns and stars,
From elemental wars,
From interflux of powers and savage ire
That bid the engirding night pause and admire,
From anguish and despair, the wordless brood
That fill the expanse of forests primal-rude,
I have brought forth that mine unenvying soul might know
The lofty love wherewith but Freedom's self can glow!"

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